IT'S ALL IN THE PAST

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Welcome to a teacher's guide I designed to share with educators of ELL students that not only helped improve my students' language learning experience in the classroom, but my teaching practice as well.

This project is a response to what I noticed to be a challenge for both my ELL students and myself in multiple school settings--teaching and learning specific English grammar skills. Prior to beginning this program, over the past ten years I had the privilege of working in a number of schools-- both internationally and stateside--teaching various ages/levels of ELL learners. It was, however, my time in rural Alaska that prompted me to seek out additional schooling for help in overcoming the challenges of teaching grammar skills.

In the spring of 2013, the Applied Linguistics program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks offered educators in Alaska an opportunity to receive training in Second Language Acquisition. Determined to learn more about my students and which best practices work for them, I applied and was accepted into the program.

Since then, I have enjoyed implementing effective teaching strategies and assessments that are meaningful and relevant. Taking this knowledge and producing a final project not only helped me understand why I can't allow my students to be just passive learners, but actually addressed some of the instructional challenges I experienced in the classroom.

It's All in the Past Literature Review

One day I asked my students to journal about what they did that weekend. I quickly noticed two things: my students all wrote about being outside or doing subsistence, and they frequently wrote in the present tense about activities completed in the past. As a elementary school teacher in southwest Alaska with many at least partially L1 Yugtun students, my objective was to teach English grammar, including correcting common mistakes with past tense endings. Conventional methods of teaching grammar, however, are not effective, so instead I incorporated storytelling and student funds of knowledge. How might I use my students' interest in being out on the land in order to more effectively teach grammar? To answer this question my paper examines the theories that support effective teaching, the cultural backgrounds of my students and the development of culturally relevant materials.

Whether their family, community, or cultural histories shape students background knowledge, good teachers find ways of building on the knowledge their students bring into the classroom. Centering my instruction on what is familiar to my students, particularly on their lives and experiences, while meeting state educational requirements is central to helping students feel that their knowledge base contributes to their learning. Students can always add to it without changing who they are as representatives of their culture. This is why teachers have begun to utilize multiliteracies and funds of knowledge in the classroom.

While learning about and creating task-based language learning activities (see section below) for my final project, I drew upon the theory of multiliteracies. I engaged 12 sixth-graders in the multiliteracies practice of digital storytelling (i.e., multimedia

composing that consists of texts, images, and sounds to tell stories) in a dual-language-enriched classroom. The goal was to create a context in which students would complete a task-based language learning activity and share their multiple literacies and identities using different learning modes (visuals, sound, gestures, etc.).

Literacy means not only the ability to read and write text but also the ability to negotiate meaning. What is considered traditional and school based is not enough for our students to succeed in today's society. Spence (2009) suggested that this is not to say that the traditional literacies have no purpose but that they should be included in multiple literacy practices. The term 'multiliteracies' was coined by The New London Group (TNLG) in 1996, when it acknowledged the technological changes taking place in the world and the need to redefine literacy pedagogy as well as what it means to compose chunks of meaning. TNLG suggested that "to be relevant, learning processes need to recruit, rather than attempt to ignore . . . the different subjectivities, interests, intentions, commitments and purposes that students bring to learning" (p. 18). TNLG (1996) stated that learners make meaning in a number of ways, including spatially, linguistically, visually, through gestures—all are different modalities of learning. The term multimodal refers to when two or more of these modes are used together to create meaning. Children experience multimodal literacy practices in their homes and communities. In the village of Tuntutuliak where I currently teach, children who learn to drive a four-wheeler or a boat are part of a literacy event, as this requires observing, instruction, and feedback. They also experience a range of everyday literacy practices with diverse media, such as phones, computers, and Internet-supported screen-based information and communication.

For teachers, this means that instruction should include various ways of knowing something. Combining personal photos or drawings, music, and narrative writing are examples of multimodal meaning making. Dalton (2012) wrote that this type of "interaction between modes is significant for communication" (p. 334), as it helps students "accomplish their communication goals" (p. 338). For my project, It's All in the Past, I asked that my students create multimodal texts using digital media that allowed them to express themselves in a manner that was not restricted solely to a linguistic mode (verbal communication/reading /writing) but rather in a multimodal or nonlinguistic way using sounds, visuals, and demonstrations. This allowed the students who typically felt embarrassed speaking and reading in the target language feel more comfortable.

Researchers (Warschauer, 1996) not only believe that educators can draw upon multimodality to help better convey meaning and develop literacy but also that multiliteracies likewise support students in expressing their culture through language, media, and other - of literacy.

With a multiliteracies approach, teachers can better serve bi- and multilingual students in the classroom as it 1) highlights the need to engage students actively with literacy and 2) acknowledges the importance of culture and identity that each student possesses.

Funds of Knowledge

Digital storytelling, a multiliteracies practice, allows students to think about their lives and experiences outside of the classroom. Given that multiliteracies suggests using a student's life experiences to create meaningful classroom activities within a community of learners, funds of knowledge will be accessed. "Funds of knowledge" is defined by

researchers Moll et al., (1992) as "[referring] to the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p. 133). Gutierrez (2001) wrote on funds of knowledge that sharing these bodies of knowledge enriches an English language learner's (ELLs) curriculum because it connects the themes that exist outside the classroom to the students and makes planned curriculum more relevant. Bringing culture and funds of knowledge as a tool into the classroom is a way to ensure that teachers provide 1) an equal voice that affects how students see their education and 2) purpose and real-world application. Unfortunately, many of my classroom instruction materials have a Westernized audience in mind. This creates conflict with my students' learning, as many of the Western curricula do not account for the cultural differences present in western Alaska.

According to Moll et al. (1992), drawing upon and reviewing students' funds of knowledge can help teachers find a "clear commonality in their interests" (Spence, 2009, p. 592). When trying to discover a student's funds of knowledge, a teacher is attempting to make a connection between home, school, and other students. Gathering this information about a student can be accomplished via conducting parent meetings and surveys and by visiting homes and community places. Bringing together that information and using it when designing lessons is one way that funds of knowledge and multiliteracies can take learning to a transformative level.

Honoring Students' Culture With Multiliteracies

For my project, *It's All in the Past*, I used narrative writing to develop real or imagined experiences or events because doing so is a curriculum expectation for grade 3–6 students. For some students, my goal was to merely engage them in writing more than

a couple of sentences. For others, writing a narrative while keeping their writing piece in the past tense was a challenge. To help my students, I not only searched for a theme that my students would relate to (hunting), but also I had them experiment with becoming active designers of meaning instead of passive recipients of knowledge.

TNLG (1996) described that literacy entails communicating and understanding what is being communicated. "We propose to treat any semiotic activity, including using language to produce or consume texts, as a matter of Design (forms of meaning) involving three elements: Available Designs, Designing, and The Redesigned" (New London Group, 1996). These elements of design ask that educators not be viewed as people determining how a child must learn but instead serve as a guide that observes and allows the learning processes of each student to take over.

As students worked through the *It's All in the Past* project, they were constantly rewriting, remaking, and reevaluating knowledge. Creating lessons that enable my students to develop strategies to understand new knowledge and help them construct their own bodies of understanding was, I found, an effective way to teach.

It's All in the Past began with my students' reading a story (Available Design) more than once to ensure understanding (teacher read aloud, partner reading, independently on iPads). To integrate my students' funds of knowledge, I chose a story entitled *Snow Tracks* with which they would be able to make relevant connections. The story included nature, wild animals, and hunting, all topics my students are extremely familiar with. By providing a more meaningful resource, I was able to draw upon students' funds of knowledge. Within the multiliteracies framework, funds of knowledge are drawn upon as available designs. Remaking the Available Design to reflect what

students understand as it is filtered through their life experiences and cultural identity is called Designing. For this project, I asked that the students co-write, but the with the help of guiding questions. Simply asking my students to write a story on the same topic of the book we just read would most likely result in a replication of that story. To avoid creating stories with the exact plot, I used guiding questions to aid in the designing process of rewriting students' own stories; the students worked in pairs. Communicating what they learned or wanted to share is part of the designing practice. The Redesigned is the transformational work (learning) of Designing. This published product then becomes another Available Design for someone else. For example, my sixth-grade students developed digital stories. These digital stories were the redesigns that then became Available Designs for a group of third graders once those redesigns had been completed.

For future implementations of this project, I would look at the rich sources of multiliteracies within my current community. Students still learn from the traditional Yupik storytelling practices, and elders can be invited to talk about various topics that are relevant to the students by narrating the stories. Asking students to analyze the events of the Available Design along with the characters and setting by collaborating with the elder and each other through collaborative dialogue is a strong practice that aids in second language acquisition (Interaction Hypothesis, Long, 1980). The process of designing entails having students process the information and use a storyboard to demonstrate what they learned but allowing them to alter the story to have a new ending or different characters. When the new story has been completed and peer and teacher edited, a new product has been crafted. Using technology for publishing the final product (blogs, applications for digital storytelling, plays) is a great tool for making the new design

available for someone else. Digital stories are a natural fit for a class website as well as social media, allowing students showcase their hard work and demonstrate what they have learned (Lambert, 2012, pg. 156).

It is understandable that teachers can oftentimes become intimidated by creating lessons that are designed to integrate 1) multiliteracies, 2) the process of Designed, 3) some sort of authentic assessment and 4) a student-centered philosophy. However, it is my hope that teachers become designers themselves in redesigning lessons to better suit the students.

Multiliterate Tasks

Multiliterate tasks engage students in gathering information from different sources, actively construct meaning, and communicate that knowledge in multimodal ways (Kalantzis et. al, 2003). Actively communicating to complete a task (TBLL) that assists all students with a skill-specific outcome (co-writing a story in the past tense), then sharing their knowledge using technology, is what I consider to be a multiliterate task.

Adair-Hauck and Donato (2010) found that educators "who are committed to teaching language for communication often find it difficult to include 'grammar instruction' into their curriculum and lessons" (p. 217). The reason for this is that young learners have a limited ability to make grammatical judgments (Ellis, 1991). What I have observed in my classroom is that the 15 minutes allotted in the Gomez and Gomez DLE lesson plan format to teach grammar is not sufficient. Students do not have enough time to use grammatical skills in conversation. Instead they merely learn them well enough to complete the work at hand and forget them shortly thereafter. Ellis (2002) advised that

grammar teaching "should not be at beginners" (p. 16), as it needs to account for how students learn.

I wanted my students to develop the skills necessary to take their own language-learning journey following high school. It was my hope that this project was a necessary step in the right direction to make this happen. I cannot teach every grammar feature that appears in the teacher's manual through explicit instruction and expect that my English language learners (ELLs) will be able to them independently. My students have never responded well to this type of instruction. I felt as if I was filling their minds with rules at a pace that leaves little time for authentic use of that information before I pressed on to the next lesson. Therefore, *It's All in the Past* was my attempt at resolving these concerns.

Explicit Grammar Teaching

As a novice teacher, I used the Present-Practice-Produce (PPP) procedure for teaching grammar because it was straightforward and delivered language in a linear manner. Eventually, I shifted to a more communicative manner. This method is based on the idea that for students to be successful in language learning, they need to have practice in communicating meaningful language. Meaningful language here refers to language being used for real communication, as a real-life necessity, rather than just a subject to study. Students using meaningful language in a CLT classroom will apply what they have learned in everyday situations, such as discussing the tools that would be needed for a hunt. However, if students were to identify all those tools from a list (in plural format), the students would not be engaged in a meaningful language activity. Before CLT, the typical lesson format for language teachers followed the (PPP)

procedure. This approach to teaching asks that 1) the teacher presents the target language while students only listen to the teacher's explicit instruction, students 2) practice the new language feature in the target language where there is a focus of the target language form through patterns and drills, and 3) "produce" the isolated target language feature in a grammar exercise for practice (Ellis, 2009, p. 224). If the beginning of the lesson is focused on the targeted isolated form, also known as focus on forms (FonFS), this could lead to more worksheet practice rather than having students demonstrate their understanding by properly using the language feature and producing genuine communication. By using PPP way to present information, students do not show that they grasped the skill or language feature well enough, and this can hinder acquisition of the target language feature. As a result, the language teacher is not meeting the students' language needs. To acquire a language, students need a source of genuine communication in which they receive plenty of oral and written opportunities to use the language. This is different from language learning, where students know the rules of the language and can talk about them, but not necessarily utilize the rules in everyday language use.

The PPP method is one that I wanted to avoid using for my project *It's All in the Past* because it assumes that learners need to be taught a skill before they can communicate. Language learning that focuses on isolated grammar skills is typically seen in the conventional classroom. Sadly, students are given few chances to use the target language when performing and responding (Nunan, 2005). They have few opportunities to negotiate for meaning (Long, 1996), which occurs when a student is trying to convey a thought, dialogue with their peers, and reflecting on their learning (the

Metalinguistic function of Swain's Output Hypothesis, 1995). The conventional way of teaching can cultivate a learning environment whereby student language learners will eventually rely on their teachers for the grammar rule to follow, with the end goal of producing error-free work. Skehan (1996) argued that learners do not simply develop a working knowledge of language when they are exposed to it but instead need to maximize the use of the target language to develop language skills through task-based instruction. Task-based language learning is grounded in the belief that students best acquire a language through communication. TBLL is a communicative approach that promotes second language learning in a motivating and interesting manner.

Task-Based Language Learning

TBLL was designed to promote learners' genuine language use outside of exercises and drills (matching, fill in the blank, etc.). Textbook exercises and worksheets generally put the students' focus on the forms of the language [FonFs] (Doughty, 2003) (see discussion of PPP) rather than on the meaning and ask the students to work with the language given to them rather than have them attempt to communicate. Forms of a language deal with the grammatical structure. For example, I taught a fifth-grade language arts lesson that reviewed plural nouns before introducing plural possessive nouns. A deliberate, explicit explanation of this skill was taught in the hope that understanding alone would help my students use the form correctly. In addition, a fill-in-the-blank worksheet serve as evidence of that understanding. Once completed, I collected their assignments and asked that they write in their journals about what type of berry they look for when they go berry picking on the weekend. When I read their journal entries, I noticed that most students continued to refer to the word "berries" as

"berry." The explicit instruction did not allow students to practice the skill other than to fill in the blanks and, therefore, another method for reteaching the skill became essential.

Tasks are different from exercises. Nunan (2005) defines the task as:

> A piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning . . . . (p. 4)

Ellis (2003) wrote that a task involves 1) primary focus on pragmatics—meaning the ability to use language appropriately in different social settings, 2) some kind of "gap" that requires the learner to use his or her linguistic resources to complete the task, and 3) a clearly defined outcome (p. 16). Ellis (2009) suggested that task-based learning should be implemented in the classroom because it can be easily related to students' lives and allow students to use language in ways that improve language learning to complete the task.

There are several advantages to using TBLL in the classroom. Ellis (2009) suggested that TBLL offers opportunities for natural learning inside the classroom because the language learning connects true everyday language use with the task at hand. It has been my experience that with language learning curriculum, a scripted use of the language is provided for the students with vocabulary and phrases that are unfamiliar and irrelevant to students' lives. This makes the practice of the language inappropriate, as they are unconnected to the context of the target language form. TBLL uses all four skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) and brings about second language

acquisition by providing instruction, comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982) and comprehensible output (Swain, 1995).

To understand the comprehensible output, it is first necessary to be familiar with the input hypothesis as originally proposed by Stephen Krashen. Input (listening/reading) is the process of understanding language, which is different from output (speaking/writing), which is the production. According to Krashen, the learner improves second language acquisition (SLA) when he or she has acquired a language, not learned it. Krashen (1982) believed comprehensible input is the most important factor for SLA. He argued that comprehensible input alone is sufficient with the understanding that the input should be delivered a little higher than the learners' state of competence. The input is to "be comprehensible and contain structures that are just beyond the learner's current level of competence (i+1)" (Krashen, 2005, p. 43) or one step beyond what the learner already understands. According to Krashen, the learners build competence in the second language by listening/understanding the language around them. Comprehensible input can be provided with background knowledge, using books with pictures that tell half the story, reading a variety of texts on the same subject, and making deeper connections with a text through discussions and peer sharing. For my project, I selected the book *Snow Tracks* that was at an appropriate reading level. The book was at my students' level of understanding with some elements that made the story a little more challenging, so the students were acquiring a bit more knowledge. This included, for example, unknown words in the story, but these words did not hinder gaining meaning from the story.

Merrill Swain (1985) offered an extension to Krashen's input hypothesis. Swain suggested that students need to practice producing the language they are learning because

"production serves to generate better input through the feedback that learners' effort at production elicit, and it allows learners to test out hypotheses about the target language grammar" (Ellis, 2005, p. 17). Furthermore, during the tasks where meaningful communication is taking place, students receive feedback from their peers. In addition to Krashen's Comprehensible input hypothesis (1982) and Swain's comprehensible output hypothesis" (1985) is Long's interaction hypothesis (1981) in which he claims that interaction is a crucial part of acquisition. A classroom needs large amounts of input provided by pair work, small group interactions, and teacher collaboration. Interactive activities with peers and teachers allow learners to demonstrate comprehension. Any challenges during the activities can also be immediately noticed and explained in the process of communication.

It is clear from the literature that the input and output hypotheses, along with the interaction hypothesis, are helpful in second language acquisition (SLA). Learners should have opportunities for producing language that is spontaneous and meaningful, where they will take risks in conveying a thought, negotiate for meaning, and make choices while seeking explanations or clarifications during the tasks. Through this type of dialogue, the student will add more linguistic knowledge without knowing that they are learning a "grammar rule."

TBLL therefore emphasizes meaning over form. Long (1991) proposed an approach called focus on the form (FonF), which differs from focus on the forms (discussed earlier). When used by teachers, FonF "overtly draws students' attention to linguistic features" during the time meaningful communication is happening (p. 45). While working through the task (role-playing, student interviews, information gap

activities, etc.) the primary focus for the students is on completing the task using their linguistic knowledge of the target language. Therefore, students are not practicing a form outright until something in the dialogue between two peers becomes problematic and there is confusion. At this time, there is a focus on the form, and once resolved, the communication and task carry on. This negotiation for meaning can help students come to understand the challenging linguistic feature or form.

TBLL also works with the learners and helps teachers create a learner-centered philosophy (Ellis, 2003) rather than a teacher-centered philosophy. A teacher-centered classroom usually means that students are quieter, with less interaction, and that they work independently. This oftentimes leads to minds wandering and little understanding as to what is taking place. In a collaborative classroom, a teacher is viewed as a guide in creating tasks that meet the students' language needs and in emphasizing that the skills that students need are more important than what the curriculum deems necessary for language learning. These tasks facilitate students' taking charge of their language learning in order to be understood.

With all of this information in mind, my explicit teacher-directed lesson on singular and plural nouns could have been better received by my students if I had used a different method of teaching. This method would include a lesson plan that centered on a task. This task would have focused on meaning, been student centered with a great deal of collaboration to strengthen my students' speaking skills, and helped keep the affective filter lowered (Krashen, 1982).

Affective Filter

When teaching grammar explicitly this past year, I noticed that some of my students would become physically agitated at the beginning of the lesson. Krashen would say that this is because the affective filters of those students were raised.

Krashen's Affective Filter Process (1982) stated that learning takes place when the student is emotionally ready to receive it. A classroom climate that is too challenging will create stress and most likely make students afraid to take risks in experiencing the target language. To create a stress-free classroom and keep the affective filter low, I used a story-based grammar method that incorporated funds of knowledge called the PACE model. Designed by Adair-Hauck and Donato (2002), the PACE model focuses on the meaning of the grammar and helps students acquire grammar more naturally.

PACE Model

I chose to incorporate the PACE model (sometimes called the story-based approach) three reasons. A PACE lesson begins with a carefully selected story that is captivating, creative or memorable. In southwest Alaska, oral storytelling plays an important role in Yup'ik culture as A.O. Kawagley (2006) writes "Myths are the Alaska Native's tools for teaching" (pg. 27). For centuries, Yup'ik Elders have recounted stories and myths that taught the history, beliefs, and principles of their people. By using a story based approach to teach grammar, my students are being immersed in a practice similar to the traditional Yup'ik activity of storytelling. Second, it is an alternative to teaching direct explicit grammar. It instead "sneaks" the grammar teaching into a lesson. Because, on the surface, the PACE model does not seem to focus on teaching grammar, my students had a much more positive experience with the PACE model for grammar instruction compared with the direct explicit approach to teaching grammar. Third, it

uses the TBLL framework. Students are asked to do meaningful tasks using the target language, and this fits in perfectly with the PACE model approach.

PACE is an acronym for each of its four steps: Presentation, Attention, Co-construction, and Extension. With the PACE model, students are presented with the targeted linguistic feature that takes on significance as it is used within an interesting story. The following four-step process encourages learner participation and comprehension.

1. Presentation

The teacher chooses a text that will foreshadow the grammar structure with an emphasis on meaning. The story is reviewed a couple of times with the use of pictures, TPR activities, and so on to increase comprehension and student engagement. The focus is not on the grammar structure in this step, but the grammar is used by the teacher and in the text. The reason that isolating grammar structures is not effective is because, at this time, words, phrases, and sentences take on meaning when they are placed in a context. Because words take on meaning when placed in a text, students can learn about grammar in stories, legends, poems, listening selections, cartoons, songs, and recipes that contain academic or authentic language. A story-based approach invites the learner to comprehend and experience the meaning and function of the grammar structure because this approach is used to convey meaning in the story. By using simplified language, pictures, and gestures, the teacher makes the story comprehensible for the students.

2. Attention

The teacher now has students focus on the language form or structure through the use of transparencies, PowerPoint, or circling or highlighting a particular linguistic form.

For instance, the English language form that was used for my project *It's All in the Past* is the simple past formed by adding **–ed** to the base form of a verb. The point is to help learners focus on the target form without needless elaboration. Questions such as, "What does each sentence have in common," may be asked.

3. Co-construction

After the teacher has focused student attention on a particular target-language form, together the student and teach co-construct the grammatical explanation. The teacher facilitates the process by helping the learners with questions that encourage them to reflect, predict, and form explanations regarding what they see is happening with the language structure or form. Collaborative dialogue needs to occur at this point whereby students "write" their own grammar rules, guiding by the teacher who will make sure that students end up with an appropriate explanation.

4. Extension

The learners use grammatical structures to complete a task related to the lesson, which helps the language remain communicative while also highlighting a particular structure. These tasks are not in the form of worksheets but rather information gap activities, role-playing, and writing activities. Visit the website: http://jillphillipsproject.weebly.com for my implementation of the PACE model and Task-Based Language Learning.

In Conclusion

It's All in the Past incorporated a task-based language learning approach, via the PACE model and helped me determine whether my students were able to communicate effectively with a specific language feature. Using this approach while involving the

multiliteracies framework put me in a more effective position to no longer be confined to a print-based text as my only resource to use in the classroom. Rather, viewing literacy as a social and cultural practice that promotes multimodalities offers me a better teaching philosophy and practice for the upcoming school years. In short, this project achieved exactly what it was designed to do and so much more.

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Teacher Guide for *It's All in the Past! Using the PACE model to Understand Simple Past Verbs.*

Recommended Grade Levels: 3-6

Purpose:
This teaching guide can be used as a vehicle for generating ideas, plans, and lessons that you can use to guide specific components of your language arts instruction.

Focus:
The focus of this teacher guide is to assist teachers of ELLs to use specific strategies that go beyond explicit instruction to help students not only grasp a challenging grammar skill, but apply that knowledge in a meaningful way.

Standard(s): Language Standards K-5
Conventions of Standard English

1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
a. Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs appropriate to function and purpose in order to apply the conventions of English.

Alaska Cultural Standards:

Standard A: Culturally-responsive educators incorporate local ways of knowing and teaching in their work.

Reflect

What is your current classroom practice when teaching grammar skills?

When it comes to teaching grammar, a fill-in- the- blank or multiple-choice worksheet is often the method for checking for understanding. If you have used these methods, how well have they worked for your students?

States have anchor language standards to increase sophisticated writing and speaking. What questions do you have about meeting these standards?

Do your students' interests influence the types of texts you use for your reading and writing instruction?

Consider the curriculum you teach with. Do they reflect the activities and backgrounds of your students?

Observe

Look at samples of your students' writing pieces, journal entries, or answers to comprehension questions. Is there a **common** problematic grammar skill that can make it difficult to understand what your students are trying to convey or disrupt the flow? One that seems to happen for most of your students?

Write out the goals or objectives for your class that this project could help accomplish. Try to limit these to one or two things.

Step 1: Implementing the PACE model to teach a grammar skill.
Time:30+ minutes
Day One Lesson Aim: Students will listen to an interesting text and complete activities to fully understand its meaning.

Before you begin:

1.) Choose a short story that is of interest to the students and contains many examples of the grammatical feature you want to bring attention to. For the project *It's All in the Past*, I chose the book Snow Tracks by Jean George (1970) as it dovetails beautifully with the subsistence activities that my students participate in.

2.) Generating good questions plays a key role in the process of helping students understand the meaning of a text. Read the story and write any questions that you can ask your students that are important to understanding the plot.

3.) Choose to read aloud the text or provide copies of the text for your students to follow along as you read.

Procedure:

1. Begin by asking students if they remember any stories that were shared with them that included tracking animals. Have them share with a partner or whole class who shared the story with them and the events of the story itself.

2. Present the book to the students and say, "I will read the title, and the back cover and look at the illustrations. What do you think this story will be about?"

3. Use pre, during, and post reading/listening/viewing activities of your choosing. Comprehension activities include:

-Think about the story. When you read the story *Snow Tracks*, try to stop at various points. Discuss what's happening and what might happen next.
-Map the characters. As you read the story, continually refer back to what the students already know about the characters and add new information. The students can make predictions based on this information.
- Map the story. The story map includes information about the characters, setting, problem, main events, and resolution.

A note about this stage: The most important thing right now is that students understand the story itself. Their attention should **not** be drawn to the grammatical feature within the text.

Reflection

I confess that, before attending the UAF Linguistics Program, I used the isolated, decontextualized method of teaching grammar skills and then assessed my students' understanding with the use of worksheets. This approach to teaching grammar is called *focus on formS*. Keeping grammar in context was new for me, and when beginning this project I was apprehensive about the PACE model's ability to lead to better retention and authentic use of the grammar skill. Depending on meaning to teach grammar was a big change for me. Using children's books to ask questions that allow the grammar feature to develop meaning created a more positive classroom experience in that the students were not being overwhelmed with new grammar rules that needed to be applied right away before truly understanding them. When students are relaxed, their affective filter is low and learning takes place. Using text with the embedded grammar feature allowed the students to relax and enjoy the read aloud without stressing about what comes next. The story that I chose for my students contained concepts and pictures that helped students to make connections to what they already know, as the story reflect aspects of their culture, helping them expand their knowledge base and motivate them to learn more.

Step 1 Day 2: Implementing the PACE model to teach a grammar skill.
Time: 30 minutes
Day Two Lesson Aim: After students understand the story, the teacher will highlight the grammatical feature, simple past tense -ed verbs, and ask questions about the patterns in the text while focusing on the meaning. Students and teacher will then reflect on and make generalizations about the grammatical feature, simple past tense -ed verbs.

Before you begin:

1.) Know that the second and third step of the PACE model is called the Attention and Co-construction phase. Your goal is to get everyone's attention on the grammar feature in the story and then have students discover with a little assistance what the "rule" is when using that feature.

2.) You will be highlighting or bringing attention to the grammatical feature (-ed verbs) in the text. Be able to project the text on a larger screen or prepare copies ahead of time with the grammatical feature that you want to draw attention to highlighted. To download the story *Snow Tracks,* visit the site: http://www.amazon.com/Snow-Tracks-Jean-Craighead-George-ebook/dp/B005H3PYGK/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=

Materials:

Snow Tracks by Jean Craighead George

Procedure:

1. Highlight the grammatical feature of the language that needs to be discussed, in this case the –ed verbs. This is to help the students focus attention of the target form.

2. Have a conversation with students over the simple past tense verbs ending in –ed by asking questions like the following:
-Why do you notice about the words that I highlighted?
-Can you show me by using movement what these words mean?
-Why do you think the author put –ed at the end of these words?
-What do you think these words are used in the sentences? (*Yesterday, before, ago, last, in*_____.) Why do you think these words that end with –ed also have these signal words in the sentences?

3. Try to elicit student observations and understandings about the grammatical feature (-ed verbs) by responding with your observations, too. Guide students to share what they know about the grammatical feature and when they would use –ed verbs in a story. Ask students what kind of stories would they see action words that end in –ed.

A note about this stage: Pay attention to student responses, as it will help you ask questions about the grammatical feature that will encourage critical thinking. You want students to think about meaning, how the grammatical feature is used and when it is used without giving them the answer.

Step 2: Guiding Questions
Time: 30+ minutes
Day Three Lesson Aim: Students will work in pairs to use their knowledge of simple past tense verbs to co-write a story using guiding questions.

Before you begin:

1.) Print off Guiding Questions (See Appendix A) or generate a list of questions (no more than 5-7) that will walk students through a beginning, middle, and end of a story. Keep in mind that you want students to create a product that uses the grammar skill in lessons 1 and 2, so design questions to elicit answers that will get students to practice using that skill. Look at *Course of Action Step 2 on website* for additional help. Also, remember, if they co-write the story, the questions needs to make allowances for that, (i.e. *The two of you* as opposed to *You* went walking one morning.) Keep in mind that these questions are maintaining a focus on meaning. The advantage to this is that it is a communicative task. In the course of answering the questions, their attention will be drawn to the linguistic forms (-ed) which is needed to perform the guiding questions task.

2,) Materials:

Guiding Questions (See Appendix A)

Procedure:

1. Explain to students that they are going to write a hunting story with a partner. Tell them that you don't know what will happen in their hunting stories, but that they are going to answer some questions together in pairs that will help them create a story.

2. Present the list of guided questions (See Appendix A) and place students in pairs. Ask that they begin reading and answering them together.

3. Collect guided questions when done.

Reflection

The goal of this lesson was to have my students show me if they were able to use the grammar skill (past tense verbs –ed) in a meaningful way. My students oftentimes struggled with using past tense verbs accurately and I wanted to give them an opportunity to use what we discovered about this particular grammar feature in the first two lessons. I wanted them to write a story on the topic of hunting. Knowing that many of my students, on average, write no more than five sentences on any given topic, I created guided questions that would elicit more of a response while *guiding* them to use past tense verbs. After completion of the project, I noticed my students were writing 15+ sentences in their stories, well above what I have seen in the past.
Asking that they complete the questions in pairs brought about dialogue between the partners on how to convey different thoughts, how to spell certain words, as well as discussions on which verbs should be used. By placing the students in pairs and assigning them the guided questions to answer together, a communicative classroom came about.

Step 3: Storyboard (Extension activity phase of the PACE model)
Time: 60+ minutes
Day Four Lesson Aim: Storyboards are used to help students visualize a sequence of events. In addition, students will be drawing in details that can be later written into stories. In this activity, students are asked to create a storyboard that reflects the action sequence in their guiding questions.

Before you begin:

1.) Show examples of storyboards created by students (see examples from online lessons or share work completed by your own students).

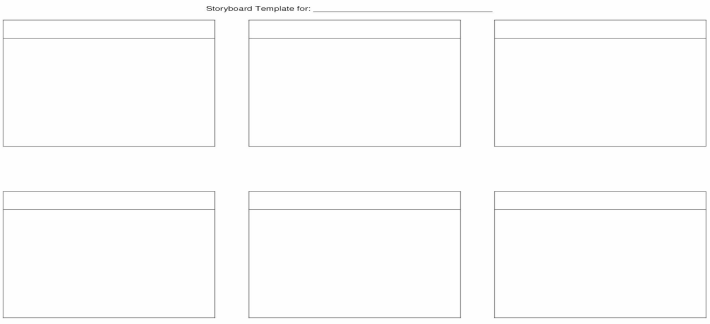
2.) Materials:

Blank paper
Pencils/colored pencils

Procedure:

1. Have each pair of students create a storyboard that reflects the answers to the guiding questions. The board should include pictures of each critical scene in their guiding questions from beginning to end.

2. Remind students to create the setting for each scene in the storyboard, as this lend itself to more details in the writing stage of the project. The students can share the boards with the class once done.



Reflection

The storyboard activity was used as a tool to assist my students in adding details to their story before writing it over again with help from the guided questions. The more images they draw, the more they have to write about. Storyboards are also great for helping students visualize what is happening in the story as it presents everything that is happening from beginning to end. This way I am able to ask my students questions about what is happening in the story and check if there are any gaps or holes in their stories before they begin to write. The students also have the visual elements already made for the digitalized format of the story when they use technology to share their final story. Using scaffolding strategies, like a storyboard, helps support students.

Step 4 and 5: Co-Writing a Story (Extension activity phase of the PACE model)
Time: (2) 60+ minutes periods
Day Four Lesson Aim: Storyboards and guided questions are used to help students to compose stories in pairs.

Before you begin:

1.) Print off enough copies of the Narrative Using Guided Questions Rubric and the Checklist for Collaborative Pairings Rubric for each student to review.

2.) Materials:

Completed Guiding Questions
Lined paper for writing
Completed Storyboards
Narrative Using Guided Questions Rubric (See Appendix D)
Checklist for Collaborative Pairings (See Appendix C)

Procedure:

1. Pass out Narrative Using Guided Questions Rubric. Explain that this is the tool that will be used to see if students can accurately use simple past tense verbs in a story. Discuss the categories and ask students if there are any questions.

2. Ask students to grab their storyboard and guided questions and place it in front of them so it is easily accessible.

3. Ask students to think of a title for their story and discuss it with their partner. Once decided, have them write it on the top line of their lined sheet of paper.

4. Explain that the first square of the storyboard is the beginning of their story. Have students read over the first couple of answers of their guided questions and look over the first square or two of the storyboard.

5. Now students have all that they need to get to co-writing their story. Remind students to re-read over their story once written and to check it makes sense.

6. When paired groups complete their story, hand them the Checklist for Collaborative Pairings. This checklist will help students edit their own stories and determine if they met the requirements of the rubric I will use when the project is completed.

7. When time permits, collect stories as students have completed the checklist and have the students rewrite their story. Once done, have students meet with you, bringing with them dictionaries, pens, a thesaurus, and edit the paper once more, together. Have students rewrite one final time.

Reflection

What I like about this process is that it allows for immediate interaction with another peer. When co-writing a story, students use many literacy methods to get the task of writing a story done. They look at the storyboard (a visual graphic organizer to make meaning) to guide them in writing process, and they discuss with each other the many ways to write the next event of the story. All of these ways of communicating and making meaning are *multimodal* because they require visuals, auditory and verbal skills, and critical thinking skills to complete the task. When one student wanted to write an event in a particular way and the other student in the pair disagreed, persuasive skills were needed to be convincing. Collaboration helped improve the stories that were written, as the vocabulary skills differed amongst the paired students and the collaboration brought about stronger word choice in most cases.

When they were ready for the editing stage of the writing process, I felt that students should look at a checklist (as a type of peer-assessment) first when editing their story. By doing this, I saw students that typically don't see the errors in their writing more attentive when going over the checklist with a peer. This may have been because they knew that it was a shared effort and therefore their affective filters perhaps weren't high. Using this peer edit step heightened the awareness of the grammatical features that were apart of the learning outcome for the project.

Step 6: Co-Writing a Story (Extension activity phase of the PACE model)
Time: 60+ minutes
Day Four Lesson Aim: Students will practice their oral skills to narrate their stories in conjunction with images using a story publishing application.

Before you begin:

1.) Make sure you have downloaded a story publishing application of your choosing to an iPad. I prefer to use Adobe Voice. Give students an opportunity to learn about the application of your choosing. Model how to make a sample clip using the application by first choosing a topic is familiar to all and writing a short narrative on the board.
While using the application, explain:
-Which images to use to illustrate the story
-Why it is necessary to rehearse reading for fluency and pacing

Note: I suggested that my students use their illustrations from the storyboard they created as it depicted the events of their story.

2.) Materials:

Edited Stories
Highlighters
Completed Storyboards
Technology Rubric (See Appendix E)
Self-Assessment Rubric (See Appendix B)

Procedure:

1. Pass out Technology Rubric. Explain that this is the tool that will be used to see if students followed directions in using the iPad publishing application to share their story. Discuss the categories and ask students if there are any questions.

2. Ask students to grab their storyboard, edited story, and an iPad and place it in front of them so they are easily accessible.

3. Ask students to think of a way to evenly split their stories so that both students equally share the narrating of the stories. Have students then begin to highlight their reading parts on the edited story. Circulate to make sure this is done correctly.

4. Give students a place to record their stories.

5. Now students have all that they need to record their stories. Circulate in case students need help.

6. When paired groups complete their story, hand them the technology rubric one more time and have them review it while listening to their stories.

7. Once groups return, discuss and offer feedback and allow them to make any changes necessary. Hand out Self-Assessment to each student when final product is completed.

Reflection

By having my students create a digital story using the AdobeVoice App, I noticed that it reinforced their existing literacy skills (researching, writing, problem solving, and presenting) while allowing them to develop new multiliteracies (digital, information, visual and media literacies). It also provided an opportunity for them take the *Snow Tracks* story (an Available Design) and through collaboration and task-based activities (Designing) create their own story (a Redesigned piece) that they were proud to share with other ELL students.

Appendix A:

Guiding Questions

1. You and you partner wanted to go on a hunt. Why?

2. You both listened to an adult about where to go and the supplies you needed. Who was it and what did the adult say?

3. You both moved out at what time of day and in which direction?

4. Both of you planned to hunt what animal?

5. You spotted that animal. What happened?

6. You both realized it got dark fast. What happened?

Appendix B:

Self-Assessment

2 points: Meets expectations: I knew my responsibilities and followed through in this category.
1 Point: Developing: I am learning how to take on this responsibility as a student.
List the category _____ _____
0 Points: Beginning: I need to speak with the teacher about this category.
List the category _____ _____

Category	2	1	0
Focus on the task	I stayed on the task the entire time.	I stayed on task most of the time. My partner/teacher only redirected me a couple of times.	I hardly stayed on task and was reminded many times to stay on task.
Listening, Discussing, Questioning	I respectfully listened, discussed, asked, questioned, and helped during the project.	I had trouble listening with respect, and letting my partner have a turn talking.	I argued with my partner and did not listen with respect.
Teamwork	I always had a positive attitude about the project and working with partner.	I sometimes made fun of the project or the work of my partner.	I really didn't want to work and I had a bad attitude.
Work Habits	I completed all of the tasks in the project.	I completed most of the tasks in the project.	I did not complete the tasks. I just completed a few.
Student input			

Appendix C:

Collaborative Checklist

Criteria	Tally Marks
Verbs that end in –ed (happened, walked)	How many verbs can you find that end in –ed?
Bonus	How many past tense verbs can you find that don't end in –ed?
Guided Questions	How many guided questions did we answer fully?
Bonus	How many of the sentences are written with coordinating conjunctions?
Character Description	How many of the characters are described using adjectives from the word wall?
Bonus	How many of my characters are described using adjectives from the word wall?
Sequencing	We have a: ___ Beginning __Middle __End

Appendix D:

Narrative Using Guiding Questions Rubric

Category	4 -BONUS	3	2	1
Past Tense	Students are able to use the simple past tense. [VERB+ed] or irregular verbs. Knowledge of common irregular verbs is evident.	Students are able to use the simple past tense [VERB+ed].	Students are rarely able to use the simple past tense [VERB +ed].	Students are unable to use the simple past tense. Knowledge of endings is not evident.
Guided Questions	Answered guided questions fully with extra details and it flows naturally; sentences are longer. Uses coordinating conjunctions: and/or/for/ but…	Answers to guided questions are simple, but not lacking details. Sentences are organized and complete.	Answers to guided questions are often incomplete, repetitive, and disorganized.	Answers to guided questions are incomplete; students made little effort.
Character Description	Characters are named clearly and given descriptions using adjectives from the word wall.	Simple description of named characters.	Characters are named.	No description of characters.
Sequencing	Well-developed sequenced events.	Simple sentences in correct sequence.	Short, simple sentences that begin the same way; story is confusing.	Fragments. Sentences don't make sense; no sense of story.

What I liked about your story:

Appendix E

Digital Storytelling: Technology Use Rubric

4=Meets expectations 3=Developing 2=Beginning 1=Needs another look

Category	4	3	2	1
Voice-Consistency	Voice quality of both readers is clear and can be heard throughout the story.	Voice quality is clear for both readers and can be heard most of the story.	Voice quality is clear for both readers and can be heard throughout half of the story.	Voice quality is not clear and cannot be heard for most of the story.
Pacing	The readers read and the pace (rhythm and voice punctuation) fits the story line and helps the audience really get into the story.	Sometimes the readers speak too fast or too slowly for the storyline.	Tries to use pacing (rhythm and voice punctuation), but it is often noticeable that the pacing does not fit the storyline.	The readers make no attempt to match the pace of the storytelling to the storyline.
Images	Images match the different parts of the story	Images match some parts of the story.	An attempt was made to use images but it needed more work.	No attempt to use images.
Teamwork	Teamwork The pair shared the work equally in reading the story.	The pair shared the work 60-40% in reading the story.	The pair shard the work 75-25% in reading the story.	The pair let one student dominate reading the story the entire time.

It's All in the Past

Search

Authentic Assessments

In order to accurately measure what my students learned--and determine whether they can demonstrate their grasp of that knowledge--I utilized authentic assessments. O'Malley and Valdez Pierce (1996) use the term authentic assessment to mean "the multiple forms of assessment that are consistent with the classroom goals, curricula and instruction" (p. 2) that reflect "student learning, achievement, motivation, and attitudes on instructionally-relevant classroom activities" (p. 4). This approach to evaluating student work includes written pieces, check lists, rubrics, and self/peer assessments, all of which I have designed for this project.

Typical assessments contain different types of questions (true or false, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank) and can be viewed as less meaningful to students since they do not promote the use of higher-order thinking skills, but instead may only reveal if a student has memorized that which is necessary to complete the assessment. However, with authentic assessments (which often require research, reasoning and discussing skills in order to accomplish the task), students are called upon to answer questions using collaboration, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Standard assessments key into reading ability and can identify what a student might understand about a language (i.e. grammatical forms, vocabulary) but not one's ability to apply that understanding to produce authentic language. These forms of summative assessments usually take place after a period of time and evaluate student progress according to the number of correct answers, rather than whether they are advancing toward their set learning goals.

According to research (Swain, 1985), students need opportunities to practice the language (speaking and writing), which Merrill Swain (1985) writes aids in developing second language acquisition. Therefore, lessons should be created with language objectives in mind, and assessments should be developed to reflect what students were capable of achieving with the language. Traditional tests offer little insight into whether or not a student can produce the language in more than one format. This type of assessment potentially produces inaccurate results of the student's language learning--since students are able to guess--which can invalidate the test. Looking solely at the correct answers on a traditional assessment, and rarely taking into consideration one's oral and written language abilities, gives an inaccurate view of what the student is capable. With authentic assessments, proof of what one can do with the language is revealed, which helps teachers in monitoring and designing lessons to enable the student to progress with his/her language abilities.

One of my responsibilites as an elementary teacher is to help my students develop proficiency in English language arts. Engaging my students in task-based language learning (TBLL) requires that I redesign my conventional methods of assessing my students. Rubrics enhance what I can tell about my students ability levels when they demonstrate the knowledge through task-based TBLL. Creating the rubrics and checklists gave me an opportunity to determine if my students were meeting the state standards while acknowledging the different ways students make meaning. A group of scholars, referring to themselves as the "New London Group" (TNLG) outlined an approach to literacy pedagogy that they called multiliteracies (TNLG, 1996). They acknowledged a wider range of modes for expressing meaning. With this being the case, I needed to redesign how I assessed my students in throughout my project because a paper and pencil test would not evaluate accurately that which they have learned.

Advantages to Using Authentic Assessments

The advantages to using authentic assessments are: 1) hold both the students and teachers accountable; 2) show what the students have learned; 3) can be created to meet the requirements of the district-mandated curriculum; 4) offer meaningful feedback; and 5) resemble real-life tasks.

Rubrics, a form of authentic assessment, are scoring guides that help teachers evaluate student performance and define the criteria that students' resulting work should show. The criteria will hold the teacher responsible for imparting the necessary skills and ensure that what is assessed has been already taught (i.e., does it measure what it is supposed to measure). For rubrics to remain a valid tool for grading, and given that the criteria should match the skills that were taught or modeled, I created three different rubrics--one each for the writing portion of the task; evaluating the story in the digital format; and a self-assessment--all designed specifically for this project and the learning outcomes that I would like to see met. This alleviated any confusion on the part of the students as to what they are being asked to produce.

Rubrics are both formative and diagnostic in that they enable teachers to look at a student's display of work, assess it, and use the results to plan the next steps of instruction. This is the purpose of assessment- improvement, and as such my rubrics have consequential validity. This is different from the annual standardized test/summative assessments. Standardized tests do not provide the time necessary for improvement or change instruction to meet the students' needs based on what they already know and what they can learn next.

Designing rubrics and checklists that are built around a learning objective can support classroom instruction. Teachers can still operate under the district-mandated curriculum but use authentic assessments in lieu of or in connection with traditional assessments. Authentic assessments require teachers to choose a learning objective, which can come straight from the curriculum, and clearly state the objective in the criterion section of the rubric, enabling students to see what they are expected to produce. Authentic assessments continue to support learning during the process, whereas traditional tests are given after a skill or concept has been taught. As the results of their efforts are shared with others through feedback, students become aware of content and work effort, and begin to think critically about it, potentially increasing their desire to learn and think more logically on future tasks.

Offering feedback on the rubrics to students both in areas of strength and needed improvement can lead to growth. Identifying what the students are doing right provides momentum to launch into what they need to work on next. When addressing the areas of needed improvement with students, it is important to keep in mind the objective of the lesson and to not overwhelm the students with all of the problematic areas. My goal was to use feedback on the rubric to identify where the student was successful and then use that positive reinforcement to encourage him to be persistent in working on the areas that needed improvement.

Rubrics are used to assess a student's performance on a task. These are authentic tasks if they resemble something that a student might encounter in the real world (interviews, phone calls, writing reports, etc.). Rubrics can also be connected to a real-world experience by virtue of criteria set out by the teacher. Meeting deadlines, following instructions, and understanding what is quality work are all issues that students will encounter in the real world.

Created Authentic Assessments

Rubric for Collaborative Writing Piece

Rationale :

The purpose of this authentic assessment was to determine if students met the learning outcome. Were they engaged in the first part of the task-based learning activity well enough to use their developed understanding of simple past-tense verbs and apply that knowledge to the extension activity? The extension activity was a collaborative writing piece that asked pairs of students to answer guiding questions as a means of setting the foundation for their story. The reason for pair work was because of the research that indicated interaction and collaborative dialogue promoted second language acquisition (Swain and Lapkin, 1998).

When I designed this rubric I kept most of the focus on the communicative nature of the writing. I did include assigning relative weights to specific grammar skill, but not the language conventions (i.e., mechanics and spelling). I did this in order to encourage students to communicate freely through writing.

The criterion laid out in this particular rubric supported the how and why of my project. Past tense is a problematic area for students acquiring English as a second language. Often I see an overgeneralization of a verb, or students using just the bare stem of the verb to describe something that already happened. The State Board of Education adopted Content Standards that require students to produce *clear sequence events* in a *clear and coherent* manner. My rubric for this project was designed in order to help my students meet this requirement. The guiding questions were key in helping my students write using past-tense verbs while directing them to keep their story in sequential order.

In addition to making a rubric for my students that matched the learning objective, I wanted to note the importance of meeting the needs of all of my students. A fourth *bonus* section was created for those students that have knowledge that goes beyond the criteria. Creating a bonus section for students to showcase their knowledge or even challenge them on the same criteria met their needs. It also offered the possibility of spark the interest of others to consider going beyond what was expected of them.

Given that this rubric was assessing my students' ability to write a collaborative narrative piece with completed actions, my rubric had content validity. It was composed of the elements that met the requirements of a story written in the past.

With the initial activities of my project and the guiding questions, students were asked to write a piece and remain in the past tense throughout its entirety. This rubric communicated effectively what I was looking for in their writing, without confusing them. It was also my desire to see that it adequately reflect the levels at which my students were able to perform the tasks. If while monitoring their progress I saw that they were struggling to meet the expectation, I was able to zone in on and help them develop some of the skills they needed for the future tasks.

Checklist for Collaborative Pairings

Rationale :

This checklist was designed to match the rubric that I used to assess their work. It was used after they completed the guiding questions along with a first rough draft of their story. It proved to be an effective way for students to compare their own work to the set criteria in an engaging way. My students would tally their responses, bringing to their attention whether or not they met the criteria, and gave them opportunities to revise their work and make improvements before moving onto the next step of peer editing.

By putting this checklist into the hands of my students before I graded them gave them a sense of power. They knew what it is they needed to look for to determine if they met the criteria laid out in the rubric for collaborative writing. This personal investment in an assignment allowed my students to reach their full potential on a project.

Technology Rubric:

Rationale :

While I am still new to using digital tools as a part of the assignment, I do know that technology is all the rage right now and incorporated it into my task-based learning activity. Most of my students enjoy communicating their collaborative stories with the help of digital storytelling. Digital storytelling integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing--all necessary components for developing one's second language acquisition. (Swain, 2000). Digital storytelling is a meaningful way to encourage students to practice their target language while giving them a platform for sharing their story with an audience beyond the classroom walls. Using digital media as a means for communicating their stories required a rubric that explained to my students what they were being asked to produce, while keeping them on track. The rubric listed

the criteria necessary for a successful outcome and allowed them to see a connection between their work effort and grade. Again, this was a real-world connection, with the grade they received on this particular rubric being a direct result of how well they were paying attention to the criteria. Often, those who pay attention to detail are rewarded in one way or another.

Measuring the quality of my students' digital story required that I design a rubric that was valid and reliable. The criterion listed on this rubric was related to specific skills that I wanted to see my students continue developing, and digital storytelling was a great way to motivate them to do so. However, reading sections of text aloud with a partner can inhibit meaning drawn from the story if the fluency and voice consistency is weak. Drawing my students' attention to this problem by making it a criterion that needed to be met encouraged them away from the current robotic, word-by-word reading that I hear to a more clear and fluent reading of the text. In assessing the quality of the digital stories, I needed to decide how essential the skills/knowledge on the rubric are to the actual creation of the digital story. I was satisfied that the criterion was essential, because without them the potential for stories with lackluster reading was pretty much a foregone conclusion. Asking other teachers to help in assessing my students' work--and gauging whether they, too, would arrive at the same score when using the rubric--was preparatory to using the rubric. To determine this rubric's reliability, it was first used on a sample digital story to test for effectiveness.

Self-Assessment

Rationale :

Self-assessments a way for students to internalize their own learning (O'Malley &Pierce, 1996). For them to be effective, self and peer evaluations were co-created with my students. In this way, they can make contributions to the rubric in addition to learning the scoring criteria—since they helped develop it.

Self-assessments help students identify whether they did a good job on the tasks, and allow them to make adjustments if there is a need for improvement. This can foster change in how my students might embark on the next project or task. Self-evaluations using rubrics and conducted at the end of (and sometimes even throughout) a project, can help students discover how to make upcoming projects even more successful. Students will be able to see individual growth, even in the midst of a group project. From one learning experience to the next my students can evaluate their work and effort.

Using a self-assessment style rubric prevented skewed or lopsided student self-evaluations. My students have a habit of either overestimating or underestimating a demonstration of work on open-ended question surveys, which threatens the validity of the survey. To increase the objectivity of the evaluation, I assigned grades based on a rubric rather than open-ended questions (*Did you put your best effort into this assignment?*) which proved to be more effective. What does one mean by the word best? Open-ended questions being answered satisfactorily can be difficult for students as they are often struggling to word sentences in such a way as to be completely honest or communicate what they are trying to say. Students become better language learners when they are able to look at their work and process not only what they are learning, but their attitudes and efforts as well. This self-assessment rubric helped them see what it is they did well, and what they can do differently next time.

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O'Malley, J.M., & Valdez Pierce, L.(1996). Authentic assessment for English language learners: Practical approaches for teachers. New York: Addison-Wesley

Swain, M. (2000) The output hypothesis and beyond: mediating acquisition through collaborative dialogue. In J.P. Lantolf (ed.), Sociocultural theory and second language learning. Oxford University Press. 97–114.

Swain, M., & Lapkin, S. (1998). Interaction and second language learning: Two adolescent French immersion students working together. The Modern Language Journal, 82, 320-337.

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Rubric for Collaborative Writing Piece

Rationale:

The purpose of this authentic assessment was to determine if students met the learning outcome. Were they engaged in the first part of the task-based learning activity well enough to use their developed understanding of simple past-tense verbs and apply that knowledge to the extension activity? The extension activity was a collaborative writing piece that asked pairs of students to answer guiding questions as a means of setting the foundation for their story. The reason for pair work was in the research which indicated that interaction and collaborative dialogue promotes second language acquisition (Swain and Lapkin, 1998).

When I designed this rubric I kept most of the focus on the communicative nature of the writing. I did include assigning relative weights to specific grammar skill, but not the language conventions (e.g., mechanics and spelling). I did this in order to encourage students to communicate freely through writing. The criterion laid out in this particular rubric supported the how and why of my project. Past tense is a problematic area for students acquiring English as a second language. Often I see an over-generalization of a verb, or students using just the bare stem of the verb to describe something that already happened. The State Board of Education adopted Content Standards that require students to produce *clear sequence events* in a clear *and coherent* manner. My rubric for this project was designed in order to help my students meet this requirement. The guiding questions were key in helping my students write using past-tense verbs while directing them to keep their story in sequential order.

In addition to making a rubric for my students that matched the learning objective, I want to note the importance of meeting the needs of all of my students. A fourth *bonus* section was created for those students that have knowledge that goes beyond the criteria. Creating a bonus section for students to showcase their knowledge might even spark the interest of others to look into going beyond what is expected of them. This offered the possibility of collaboration, and students were exposed to deepening their understanding by choosing to pursue the criteria on the bonus section.

Given that this rubric was assessing my students' ability to write a collaborative narrative piece with completed actions, my rubric had content validity. It was composed of the elements that meet the requirements of a story written in the past. Producing the same score for the same writing piece among a group of raters without discrepancies was my goal.

With the initial activities of my project and the guiding questions, students were asked to write a piece and remain in the past tense throughout its entirety. This rubric's job was to communicate effectively what I was looking for in their writing, without confusing them. It was also my desire

that it adequately reflect the levels at which my students were able to perform the tasks.

Narrative Using Guided Questions Rubric

Category	4 -BONUS	3	2	1
Past Tense	Students are able to use the simple past tense. [VERB+ed] or irregular verbs. Knowledge of common irregular verbs is evident.	Students are able to use the simple past tense [VERB+ed].	Students are rarely able to use the simple past tense [VERB +ed].	Students are unable to use the simple past tense. Knowledge of endings is not evident.
Guided Questions	Answered guided questions fully with extra details and it flows naturally; sentences are longer. Uses coordinating conjunctions: and/or/for/ but…	Answers to guided questions are simple, but not lacking details. Sentences are organized and complete.	Answers to guided questions are often incomplete, repetitive, and disorganized.	Answers to guided questions are incomplete; students made little effort.
Character Description	Characters are named clearly and given descriptions using adjectives from the word wall.	Simple description of named characters.	Characters are named.	No description of characters.
Sequencing	Well-developed sequenced events.	Simple sentences in correct sequence.	Short, simple sentences that begin the same way; story is confusing.	Fragments. Sentences don't make sense; no sense of story.

What I liked about your story:

Questions I have:

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Checklist for Collaborative Pairings

Rationale:

This checklist was designed to match the rubric that I used assess their work. It was used after my students completed the guiding questions and a first rough draft of their story. It was an effective way for students to compare their own work to the set criteria in an engaging way. My students tallied their responses, bringing to their attention whether or not they met the criteria, and gave them an opportunity to revise their work and make improvements before moving onto the next step of peer editing.

By putting this checklist into the hands of my students before I graded them gave them a sense of power. They knew what it is they needed to look for to determine if they met the criteria laid out in the rubric for collaborative writing. This personal investment in an assignment allowed my students to reach their full potential on a project.

Criteria	Tally Marks
Verbs that end in –ed (happened, walked)	How many verbs can you find that end in –ed?
Bonus	How many past tense verbs can you find that don't end in –ed?
Guided Questions	How many guided questions did we answer fully?
Bonus	How many of the sentences are written with coordinating conjunctions?
Character Description	How many of the characters are described using adjectives from the word wall?
Bonus	How many of my characters are described using adjectives from the word wall?
Sequencing	We have a: ___ Beginning __Middle __End

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Technology Rubric

Rationale:

While I am still new to using digital tools as a part of the assignment, I do know that technology is all the rage right now and therefore incorporated it into my task-based learning activity. Most of my students enjoyed communicating their collaborative stories with the help of digital storytelling. Using digital media as a means for communicating their stories did require a rubric, which helped explain to my students what they were being asked to produce, while keeping them on track. The rubric listed the criteria necessary for a successful outcome and allowed them to see a connection between their work effort and grade. Again, this was a real-world connection, with the grade they received on this particular rubric being a direct result of how well they were paid attention to the criteria. Often, those who pay attention to detail are rewarded in one way or another.

Measuring the quality of my students' digital story required that I design a rubric that was valid and reliable. The criterion listed on this rubric was related to specific skills that I wanted to see my students continue developing, and digital storytelling was a great way to motivate them to do so. However, reading sections of text aloud with a partner can inhibit meaning drawn from the story if the fluency and voice consistency is weak. Drawing my students' attention to this problem by making it a criterion that needed to be met encouraged them away from the current robotic, word-by-word reading that I hear to a more clear and fluent reading of the text. In assessing the quality of the digital stories, I needed to decide how essential the skills/knowledge on the rubric were to the actual creation of the digital story. I was satisfied that the criteria was essential, because without them the potential for stories with lackluster reading is pretty much a foregone conclusion. Asking other teachers to help in assessing my students' work--and gauging whether they, too, would arrive at the same score when using the rubric--was preparatory to using the rubric. To determine this rubric's reliability, it was first used on a sample digital story to test for effectiveness.

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Digital Storytelling: Technology Use Rubric

4=Meets expectations 3=Developing 2=Beginning 1=Needs another look

Category	4	3	2	1
Voice-Consistency	Voice quality of both readers is clear and can be heard throughout the story.	Voice quality is clear for both readers and can be heard most of the story.	Voice quality is clear for both readers and can be heard throughout half of the story.	Voice quality is not clear and cannot be heard for most of the story.
Pacing	The readers read and the pace (rhythm and voice punctuation) fits the story line and helps the audience really get into the story.	Sometimes the readers speak too fast or too slowly for the storyline.	Tries to use pacing (rhythm and voice punctuation), but it is often noticeable that the pacing does not fit the storyline.	The readers make no attempt to match the pace of the storytelling to the storyline.
Images	Images match the different parts of the story	Images match some parts of the story.	An attempt was made to use images but it needed more work.	No attempt to use images.
Teamwork	Teamwork The pair shared the work equally in reading the story.	The pair shared the work 60-40% in reading the story.	The pair shard the work 75-25% in reading the story.	The pair let one student dominate reading the story the entire time.

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Self-Assessment

Rationale:

Self-assessments became a great tool for my students to internalize their own learning. For them to be effective, self and peer evaluations were co-created with my students.

The self-assessments helped my students identify whether they did a good job on the tasks, or if they needed to make adjustments their work. This fostered change in how the student embarked on the next project or task. Self-evaluations at the end of (and sometimes even throughout) a project, helped my students discover how to make upcoming projects even more successful. Students were able to see individual growth, even in the midst of a group project.

Self-Assessment

2 points: Meets expectations: I knew my responsibilities and followed through in this category.
1 Point: Developing: I am learning how to take on this responsibility as a student.
List the category _____ _____
0 Points: Beginning: I need to speak with the teacher about this category.
List the category _____ _____

Category	2	1	0
Focus on the task	I stayed on the task the entire time.	I stayed on task most of the time. My partner/teacher only redirected me a couple of times.	I hardly stayed on task and was reminded many times to stay on task.
Listening, Discussing, Questioning	I respectfully listened, discussed, asked, questioned, and helped during the project.	I had trouble listening with respect, and letting my partner have a turn talking.	I argued with my partner and did not listen with respect.
Teamwork	I always had a positive attitude about the project and working with partner.	I sometimes made fun of the project or the work of my partner.	I really didn't want to work and I had a bad attitude.
Work Habits	I completed all of the tasks in the project.	I completed most of the tasks in the project.	I did not complete the tasks. I just completed a few.
Student input			